



## Design for Function



A style based around architecture that began in the late 1920's, International style became a design phenomenon. The term was used to describe the decades of buildings built by significant architects of the time. Modernism began, just before World War II. The International Exhibition of Modern Architecture, organized by Philip Johnson, was held in 1932 and afterwards, a book was written to help organize and clarify characteristics of Modernism. These characteristics of Modernism spread throughout the world, covering most of Europe and especially spread to the United States.

The main focus of the International style was based on thoughts and ideas of Modernism: riddance of any sort of extra ornament, volume rather than mass, and balance rather than symmetry. These set of guidelines were definitely followed throughout many decades that followed.

Before the term "International style" came about, US architects were thinking about and using the same simplification process. Some US architects include Frank Lloyd Wright, Elieel Saarinen, and Irving Gill. Philip Johnson, who actually organized the Exhibition of Modern Architecture, knew that this modern movement was an aesthetic style and not just a political statement. It was a defining moment in design history, where the modern world evolved.

## Design of Decoration

Art Deco flourished in Europe for only a decade in the 1920's; in America, the style, taste and fashion extended through the 1930's. The term Deco in the U.S. was associated with a different and new cultural situation especially in architecture. Architecture needed to be uplifting, the Great Depression gave most people a strong need for escapist entertainment of diversion.

Art Deco in America, forged a precise independent architectural style; it was an architecture of ornament, geometry, energy, retrospection, optimism, color, texture, light and sometimes symbolism. It revolutionized American popular design introducing new shapes, and new materials such as chrome, vinyl, bakelite and tubular neon. Art Deco embraced function, symmetry, mathematics and technology.

